CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for ascertaining resource requirements including the steps of:

sampling a task requiring a consumable resource to provide a sample;

analyzing the sample of the task with respect to resource requirements thereof and providing task sample requirement data in response thereto; and

ascertaining the resource requirements of the task based on the task sample requirement data.

2. The invention of Claim 1 wherein the task includes printing an image on a document.

3. The invention of Claim 2 wherein the step of sampling includes the step of reading a file containing the document into a buffer.

4. The invention of Claim 3 wherein the step of sampling includes the step of formatting the file in the buffer in print format.

5. The invention of Claim 4 wherein the step of sampling includes the step of overlaying a sample window over the print formatted file in the buffer, the window having an area of 1/x times the area of the document.

6. The invention of Claim 5 wherein the step of analyzing includes the step of performing a Raster Image Processing analysis within the sample window to determine window coverage.

7. The invention of Claim 6 wherein the step of ascertaining the resource requirements of the task includes the step of multiplying the window coverage by x to determine the page coverage of the document.

8. The invention of Claim 7 wherein the step of ascertaining the resource requirements of the task includes the step of multiplying the page coverage by a number of pages in the task to determine job requirements.

9. The invention of Claim 8 including the step of comparing the resource requirements of the task to data relating to an availability of the resources.

10. The invention of Claim 9 further including the step of executing the task if sufficient resources are available.

11. The invention of Claim 10 further including the step of providing a message if sufficient resources are not available.

12. The invention of Claim 11 further including the step of securing additional resources if sufficient resources are not available.

13. A method for ascertaining resource requirements including the steps of:

sampling a task requiring a consumable resource to provide low resolution level analysis data with respect to resource requirements of the task and

comparing the low level analysis data to data relating to an availability of the resource and providing an output with response thereto.

14. The invention of Claim 13 wherein the low resolution level analysis is performed at fifty dots per square inch.

15. The invention of Claim 13 further including the step of providing actual data relating to an amount of resources required by the task.

16. The invention of Claim 15 further including the step of comparing the actual data to the low level analysis data and generating correction data in response thereto.

17. The invention of Claim 16 further including the step of adjusting the task sampling step in response to the correction data.

18. The invention of Claim 17 wherein the task includes printing an image on a document.

19. The invention of Claim 18 wherein the task includes printing plural images on plural documents.

20. The invention of Claim 19 wherein the images include text.

21. The invention of Claim 13 wherein the step of sampling includes the step of performing a Raster Image Processing analysis.

22. The invention of Claim 13 wherein the step of sampling includes the step of executing the task if sufficient resources are available.

23. The invention of Claim 22 further including the step of providing a message if sufficient resources are not available.

24. The invention of Claim 22 further including the step of securing additional resources if sufficient resources are not available.

25. A method for ascertaining resource requirements including the steps of:

overlaying a window over a document print job in a computer readable medium to provide a sample;

providing low level resolution analysis data with respect to consumable resource requirements of the sample; and

ascertaining the resource requirements of the document based on the sample.

26. A program for ascertaining resource requirements stored on a computer readable medium including:

code for sampling a task requiring a consumable resource to provide a sample;

code for analyzing the sample of the task with respect to resource requirements thereof and providing task sample requirement data in response thereto; and

code for ascertaining the resource requirements of the task based on the task sample requirement data.

27. The invention of Claim 26 wherein the task includes printing an image on a document.

28. The invention of Claim 27 wherein the code for sampling includes code for reading a file containing the document into a buffer.

29. The invention of Claim 27 wherein the code for sampling includes code for formatting the file in the buffer in print format.

30. The invention of Claim 29 wherein the code for sampling includes code for overlaying a sample window over the print formatted file in the buffer, the window having an area of 1/x times the area of the document.

31. The invention of Claim 30 wherein the code for analyzing includes code for performing a Raster Image Processing analysis within the sample window to determine window coverage.

32. The invention of Claim 31 wherein the code for ascertaining the resource requirements of the task includes code for multiplying the window coverage by x to determine the page coverage of the document.

33. The invention of Claim 32 wherein the code for ascertaining the resource requirements of the task includes code for multiplying the page coverage by a number of pages in the task to determine job requirements.

34. A program for ascertaining resource requirements stored on a computer readable medium including:

code for sampling a task requiring a consumable resource to provide low resolution level analysis data with respect to resource requirements of the task and

code for comparing the low level analysis data to data relating to an availability of the resource and providing an output with response thereto.

35. The invention of Claim 34 further including code for providing actual data relating to an amount of resources required by the task.

36. The invention of Claim 35 further including code for comparing the actual data to the low level analysis data and generating correction data in response thereto.

37. The invention of Claim 36 further including code for adjusting the code for sampling a task in response to the correction data.

38. A program for ascertaining resource requirements stored on a computer readable medium including:

code for overlaying a window over a document print job in a computer readable medium to provide a sample;

code for providing low level resolution analysis data with respect to consumable resource requirements of the sample; and

code for ascertaining the resource requirements of the document based on the sample.